<u>IN THE CLAIMS</u>:

Please cancel Claims 6 and 16 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Please amend Claims 1-5, 7-15, and 17 to read as follows. A marked-up copy these amended claims, showing the changes made thereto, is attached.

1.   (Amended) A purchase request approving apparatus capable of approving a purchase request of a desired article, comprising:

display means for displaying items of information, the items of information being (i) stored in a database in advance and (ii) associated with articles for which approval of purchase is requested, in a list window capable of displaying the articles as a list;

selecting means for selecting a desired article, in accordance with a user operation, from the articles displayed in the list window;

input means for inputting information representing approval or rejection of purchase of a selected article from the displayed articles; and

purchase approving means for, when information representing approval of purchase of the selected subject article is input, storing the inputted information in the database, and deleting from the displayed items associated with the articles displayed by said display means, displayed items associated with the selected article.

2.   (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein a purchase request for approval is requested from a requester belonging to a group based on

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predetermined common information, and wherein said apparatus further comprises

requester group setting means for setting a plurality of desired requester groups for which

approval or rejection of purchase is to be determined by said purchase approving means in

accordance with the predetermined common information.

3.   (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the group

of requesters is a section group in a company, and the predetermined common information

is an identification code, identification codes representing each section of the company.

4.   (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising

purchase request means for inputting (i) information associated with the desired article to

be purchase-requested and (ii) information for requesting approval of purchase of the

desired article and storing the input information in the database, and wherein said purchase

request means includes display means for displaying, before the input information is stored

in the database, a list of specific information associated with a person who can approve or

reject the purchase request from the requester, the requestor inputting (i) the input

information and (ii) specific information associated with a person who has set the desired

requester group by said requester groups setting means, and selecting a desired person

from whom the requester requests approval to purchase, using the displayed list.

5.   (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein, when the

information representing approval of purchase of the selected article is input and a

purchase price of the article exceeds a predetermined amount, said purchase approving means notifies a user of the purchase price exceeding the predetermined amount.

6.   (Cancelled)

7.   (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising purchase request means for (i) inputting information associated with the desired article to be purchase-requested and (ii) information for requesting approval of purchase of the desired article and storing the input information in the database.

8.   (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said display means is a browser of an Internet, the browser being executed by said purchase request approving apparatus connected to a communication network, and wherein said purchase approving means is constructed by a predetermined Web page displayed by the browser.

9.   (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said purchase request approving apparatus is a client terminal connected to a communication network which can use an intranet environment.

10.   (Amended) A purchase request approving method of approving a purchase request of a desired article using a computer, said method comprising:

a display step of displaying items of information, the items of information being (i) stored in a database in advance and (ii) associated with articles for which approval of purchase is requested, in a list window capable of displaying the articles as a list;

a selecting step of selecting a desired article in accordance with a user operation, from the articles displayed in the list window;

an input step of inputting information representing approval or rejection of purchase of a selected article from the displayed articles; and

a purchase approving step of, when information representing approval of purchase of the selected article is input, storing the inputted information in the database, and deleting, from the displayed items associated with the articles displayed in said display step, displayed items associated with the selected article.

11. (Amended) The method according to claim 10, wherein a purchase request for approval is requested from a requester belonging to a group based on predetermined common information, and wherein said method further comprises a requester group setting step of setting a plurality of desired requester groups for which approval or rejection of purchase is to be determined in said purchase approving step in accordance with the predetermined common information.

12. (Amended) The method according to claim 11, wherein the group of requesters is a section group in a company, and the predetermined common information is an identification code, identification codes representing each section of the company.

13. (Amended) The method according to claim 11, further comprising a purchase request step of inputting (i) information associated with the desired article to be purchase-requested and (ii) information for requesting approval of purchase of the desired article, and storing the input information in the database, and wherein said purchase request step includes a display step of displaying, before the input information is stored in the database, a list of specific information associated with a person who can approve or reject the purchase request from the requester, the requester inputting (i) the input information and (ii) specific information associated with a person who has set the desired requester group in said requester groups setting step, and selecting a desired person from which the requester requests approval to purchase, using the displayed list.

14. (Amended) The method according to claim 10, wherein, in said display step, a browser of an Internet is executed on a client terminal connected to a communication network to display the items of information associated with the articles, and wherein in said purchase approving step, information representing approval or rejection of purchase is input to a window on a predetermined Web page displayed by the browser.

15. (Amended) The method according to claim 14, wherein the client terminal is connected to a communication network which can use an intranet environment.

16. (Cancelled)

17.   (Amended) A computer-readable storage medium storing a program for executing a purchase request approving method of approving a purchase request of a desired article using a computer, said method comprising:

a display step of displaying items of information, the items of information being (i) stored in a database in advance and (ii) associated with articles for which approval of purchase is requested, in a list window capable of displaying the articles as a list;

a selecting step of selecting a desired article in accordance with a user operation, from the articles displayed in the list window;

an input step of inputting information representing approval or rejection of purchase of a selected article from the displayed articles; and

a purchase approving step of, when information representing approval of purchase of the selected article is input, storing the inputted information in the database, and deleting, from the displayed items associated with the articles displayed in said display step, displayed items associated with the selected article.

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-5, 7-15, and 17 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 10, and 17 are the independent claims.